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**From:** Skadowski, Suzanne  
**Sent:** Wed 11/26/2014 4:44:55 PM  
**Subject:** Stakeholders briefing invitation and News Release: EPA Proposes Smog Standards to  
Safeguard Americans from Air Pollution

Dear Colleagues,

This morning EPA Headquarters issued the following press release and invitation to a stakeholders teleconference briefing, scheduled for 9:00 am Pacific. Please let me know if you have any questions or need any more information. Thank you.

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Dear Colleagues,

Today, EPA is proposing revisions to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone, as required by the Clean Air Act, to improve public health and environmental protection. We invite you to **join today's stakeholder briefing** where senior EPA officials will provide an overview on the proposed rule and answer questions regarding the proposal. For the full news release: <http://go.usa.gov/HnrP>

To assist operators, *please dial in 15 minutes prior to the start of the call*. Details of the call can be found below:

**Participant Dial-in Number:** (866) 528-5873

**Conference ID#:** 42094441

**When:** Wednesday, November 26, 2014

**Time:** 12:00 p.m. EST

We encourage your participation and additional information can be found on our website: [www.epa.gov/ozone](http://www.epa.gov/ozone)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** [November 26, 2014](#)

## **EPA Proposes Smog Standards to Safeguard Americans from Air Pollution**

**WASHINGTON--** Based on extensive recent scientific evidence about the harmful effects of ground-level ozone, or smog, EPA is proposing to strengthen air quality standards to within a range of 65 to 70 parts per billion (ppb) to better protect Americans' health and the environment, while taking comment on a level as low as 60 ppb. The Clean Air Act requires EPA to review the standards every five years by following a set of open, transparent steps and considering the advice of a panel of independent experts. EPA last updated these standards in 2008, setting them at 75 ppb.

"Bringing ozone pollution standards in line with the latest science will clean up our air, improve

access to crucial air quality information, and protect those most at-risk. It empowers the American people with updated air quality information to protect our loved ones - because whether we work or play outdoors – we deserve to know the air we breathe is safe,” said EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. “Fulfilling the promise of the Clean Air Act has always been EPA’s responsibility. Our health protections have endured because they’re engineered to evolve, so that’s why we’re using the latest science to update air quality standards – to fulfill the law’s promise, and defend each and every person’s right to clean air.”

EPA scientists examined numerous scientific studies in its most recent review of the ozone standards, including more than 1,000 new studies published since the last update. Studies indicate that exposure to ozone at levels below 75 ppb -- the level of the current standard -- can pose serious threats to public health, harm the respiratory system, cause or aggravate asthma and other lung diseases, and is linked to premature death from respiratory and cardiovascular causes. Ground-level ozone forms in the atmosphere when emissions of nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds “cook” in the sun from sources like cars, trucks, buses, industries, power plants and certain fumes from fuels, solvents and paints. People most at risk from breathing air containing ozone include people with asthma, children, older adults, and those who are active or work outside. Stronger ozone standards will also provide an added measure of protection for low income and minority families who are more likely to suffer from asthma or to live in communities that are overburdened by pollution. Nationally, 1 in 10 children has been diagnosed with asthma.

According to EPA’s analysis, strengthening the standard to a range of 65 to 70 ppb will provide significantly better protection for children, preventing from 320,000 to 960,000 asthma attacks and from 330,000 to 1 million missed school days. Strengthening the standard to a range of 70 to 65 ppb would better protect both children and adults by preventing more than 750 to 4,300 premature deaths; 1,400 to 4,300 asthma-related emergency room visits; and 65,000 to 180,000 missed workdays.

EPA estimates that the benefits of meeting the proposed standards will significantly outweigh the costs. If the standards are finalized, every dollar we invest to meet them will return up to three dollars in health benefits. These large health benefits will be gained from avoiding asthma attacks, heart attacks, missed school days and premature deaths, among other health effects valued at \$6.4 to \$13 billion annually in 2025 for a standard of 70 ppb, and \$19 to \$38 billion annually in 2025 for a standard of 65 ppb. Annual costs are estimated at \$3.9 billion in 2025 for a standard of 70 ppb, and \$15 billion for a standard at 65 ppb.

A combination of recently finalized or proposed air pollution rules – including “Tier 3” clean vehicle and fuels standards – will significantly cut smog-forming emissions from industry and transportation, helping states meet the proposed standards. EPA’s analysis of federal programs that reduce air pollution from fuels, vehicles and engines of all sizes, power plants and other industries shows that the vast majority of U.S. counties with monitors would meet the more protective standards by 2025 just with the rules and programs now in place or underway. Local communities, states, and the federal government have made substantial progress in reducing ground-level ozone. Nationally, from 1980 to 2013, average ozone levels have fallen 33 percent. EPA projects that this progress will continue.

The Clean Air Act provides states with time to meet the standards. Depending on the severity of their ozone problem, areas would have between 2020 and 2037 to meet the standards. To ensure that people are alerted when ozone reaches unhealthy levels, EPA is proposing to extend the ozone monitoring season for 33 states. This is particularly important for at-risk

groups, including children and people with asthma because it will provide information so families can take steps to protect their health on smoggy days.

The agency is also proposing to strengthen the “secondary” ozone standard to a level within 65 to 70 ppb to protect plants, trees and ecosystems from damaging levels of ground-level ozone. New studies add to the evidence showing that repeated exposure to ozone stunts the growth of trees, damages plants, and reduces crop yield. The proposed level corresponds to levels of seasonal ozone exposure scientists have determined would be more protective.

EPA will seek public comment on the proposal for 90 days following publication in the Federal Register, and the agency plans to hold three public hearings. EPA will issue final ozone standards by October 1, 2015.

To view the proposal: <http://www.epa.gov/glo/>

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